

Message Text

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DAKAR FOR RLO

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SUBJECT: OMVS LABOR LEADERS MEET

1. THE INTER-UNION COMMITTEE OF THE OMVS STATES (SENEGAL RIVER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION) MET AT BAMAKO OCTOBER 29 TO DISCUSS INTER-UNION COORDINATION, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PLANNING FOR THE OMVS AND PAN-AFRICAN LABOR QUESTIONS. ADIOUNE CISSE, SENEGAL'S AMBASSADOR TO MAURITANIA AND PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF SENEGALESE WORKERS AND CHEIKH MALAININE ROBERT, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MAURITANIAN WORKERS UNION LED THEIR RESPECTIVE DELEGATIONS. THE MEETING WAS HOSTED BY SEKOU DIALLO, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MALIAN WORKERS (UNTM).

2. IN A RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION, THE COMMITTEE URGED RESPONSIBLE UNION PARTICIPATION IN ALL ASPECTS OF OMVS PLANNING, ASKED FOR THE ADOPTION OF A MULTI-LATERAL SOCIAL SECURITY CONVENTION HARMONIZING LABOR AND SOCIAL SECURITY LEGISLATION AND DECIDED TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

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AT THE OMVS HEADQUARTERS IN DAKAR. THE COMMITTEE ALSO

EXPRESSED ITS DETERMINATION THAT OATUU (ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY) BECOME A GENUINELY USEFUL ORGANIZATION IN SERVICE TO AFRICA.

3. COMMENT: IN A WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION OF UNION AFFAIRS UNTM SEC. GEN. DIALLO TOLD AN EMBOFF OCTOBER 28 THAT THE PROBLEM WITH THE OATUU SINCE ITS INCEPTION HAS BEEN THE PENCHANT OF CERTAIN LEADERS FOR QUICKLY THROWING TOGETHER A POLITICAL STRUCTURE WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE VIEWS AND INTERESTS OF INDEPENDENT NATIONAL UNIONS. HE THOUGHT THE GENERAL COUNCIL IN ACCRA LAST MARCH PUT THE OATUU ON BETTER FOOTING. THE JOB NOW WAS TO BUILD SLOWLY WITH PRACTICAL MEASURES FOCUSED ON TRADE UNIONISMS PRIME GOAL: BETTER WELFARE FOR WORKERS THROUGH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. OBVIOUSLY COORDINATION AMONG OMVS UNIONS AND HARMONIZATION OF LABOR LEGISLATION AMONG OMVS STATES ARE THE KIND OF PRACTICAL MEASURES DIALLO HAD IN MIND.

4. DIALLO ALSO SPELLED OUT THE PRECARIOUS POSITION OF NATIONAL UNIONS WHOSE CONCERN FOR WORKERS WELFARE OFTEN CONFLICTS WITH GOVERNMENTAL PRIORITIES AND WHOSE STATUS AS A GRASS-ROOTS ORGANIZATION IN A HIERARCHICAL CENTRAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE IS AMBIVALENT. HE NOTED THAT THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL UNION WAS PARTICULARLY DELICATE IN COUNTRIES LIKE MALI WHERE MILITARY GOVERNMENTS QUICKLY GREW IMPATIENT WITH TRADE UNION POLITICS. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE OMVS INTER-UNION COMMITTEE IN ITS SEPTEMBER 29 RESOLUTION EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS AS REGARDS UNION PARTICIPATION IN OMVS AFFAIRS. MCGUIRE

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